

BIRTHING HOPE

The Story of Advent

#FBCWooHope

Welcome to worship at The First Baptist Church of Worcester. We are glad you have chosen to begin your Advent journey with us during this holiday season. Our theme for the next four weeks will be *Birthing Hope, The Story of Advent* and each week we will look to the ancient stories of our faith and how we can hold onto the hope that Christ brings in our day. Our worship hour is created for every age and materials are available in the Narthex and Chancel entry for children to more deeply engage with quiet, hands on activities. Our prayer is that you would know the peace, joy, love, and above all, the *Hope* that this season brings to the world.

*The First Baptist Church of Worcester
Welcoming and Affirming | A Safe Space for All
First gathered in 1812*

ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 2, 2018
First Sunday of Advent
A Story of Hope
10:00 am

Thoughts on Worship

This Sunday marks the beginning of Advent and also the start of the church's liturgical year. During this time of longing and waiting for the birth of the Christ, we enter into a practice of expectation and preparation in our own lives. As we embark on a theme of "Birthing Hope," how might you cultivate space for hope to grow in your heart this season?

** Indicates that you are invited to stand in body or in spirit.
Hearing devices are available from the ushers for those needing assistance.*

Prelude

Choral Invitatory

* Processional Hymn

154 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel..... *Veni Emmanuel*
Stanzas 1-3

Lighting of the Advent Candle

One: For centuries, Christians have lighted candles during Advent as a symbol of Christ's coming light. In North America, Advent occurs in the "darkest" days of the year.

The term "Advent" means to wait expectantly and to prepare for the nativity of Jesus.

We light the candle of Hope as a celebration of the promise of God to send a Messiah.

The light of the candle is a symbol of the light of Christ that shines in the darkness.

Many: May it inspire all of us to expect with confidence the coming of the Kingdom of God, the birthing of hope.

Prayer for Advent

Reverend Brent Newberry

* Congregational Hymn

154 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel..... *Veni Emmanuel*
Stanza 4

Welcome from the Church

If you are visiting with us, and if you would like to learn more about our church or ways you can connect more deeply within the life of our church, please fill out the FBC Connection Card (located in the pew rack) and place it in the offering plate later on in the service.

Reading of the Scriptures

Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

One: May the Spirit of Wisdom lead us to understanding.

Many: Thanks be to God.

Luke 21:25-36

"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. "Be

on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

One: May the Spirit of Wisdom lead us to understanding.

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

Moment of Wonder

Reverend Natalie Webb

Children and Youth are invited to join Natalie at the front of the Chancel.

Offering of our Gifts

The ministries of our church are possible because of the generous gifts you give in support. At this time, you are invited to give your offering, as you are able.

Offertory

“E’en So Lord Jesus, Quickly Come,”

Paul Manz (b.1919)

Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sins,

Who loved us all and shed his blood that we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord, The Lord, Almighty God, Who was and is and is to come;

Sing holy, holy, Lord!

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein, Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,

For Christ is coming, is coming soon. For Christ is coming soon!

E’en so, Lord Jesus quickly come, And night shall be no more;

They need no light nor lamp nor sun, For Christ will be their All!

*** Doxology**

Veni Veni Emmanuel

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*** Prayer of Dedication**

*** Advent Hymn**

157 Come Now, O Prince of Peace..... *O So So*

Sermon

A Story of Hope

Reverend Brent Newberry

Prayers of the People

Celebration of Communion

* The Great Thanksgiving

Minister: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give God thanks and praise.

Congregation: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Minister: It is, indeed, right that we should give thanks to you, O God, for you have called us into your body as members of the church eternal and given us holy work to do for your kingdom. Therefore with all the saints, past and future, we lift up our voices together singing:

* Sanctus

738 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord.....*Land of Rest*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are filled with your glory:

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;

hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer (debts)

Agnus Dei

First Baptist Chancel Choir

Passing of the Bread and Cup

* Passing of the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be always with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

Partnering in Church Life

Just as we arrived this morning in faith, so too, we depart to be faithful partners in the work of God. Listen now for opportunities to connect more richly in the life of First Baptist.

Celebrating Our New Members

+ Natalie Webb

+ Brandon Morgan

* Departing Hymn

161 People, Look East.....*Besacon*

Benediction

Postlude

Who We Are Praying For

Walter and Kojalo family on the death of Ingeborg; Rod Ferris; the family and friends of Jinny Smith on her passing; Brad Mills; Nicole; Jane O; Betty K.; Jo, Sydney's Mom; Betty B.; Donna K.; Jess G.; Bette S.; John Torrisi.

If you or a loved one would like to be prayed for, please fill out a prayer card and drop it in the offering plate or prayer box.

Thanks for Being Here!

We are so glad you worshipped with us this morning! Thank you for being here. Each of you matters to us, and we hope to get to know you better. We are a Welcoming & Affirming Church, and a Safe Space for all people.

What that means: Who you are, and how you're created is a gift to this world and this faith community, and we celebrate the ways your life gives witness to the way of Christ in both. Maybe it's your race or nationality, your age or vocation, your sexual orientation, your gender identity, your faith background, your political affiliation or personal aspirations, you are celebrated here. You are safe here, to fully be who God has created you to be. And if you would like to partner in ministry with us, we have no doubt that your participation will make us a better faith community.

We have weekly opportunities for learning and friendship. Check out our Announcements or subscribe from our website's home page (www.fbc-worc.org) to our weekly e-newsletter on the happenings of our church.

Following our services each week, we invite you to join us in Gordon Hall for coffee and refreshments, our treat! If you're new, we'd love a chance to get to know you, and if you're a regular, well, you know what to do--make a new friend! Gordon Hall is located through the exit to your right (the pulpit side).

All-Gender Restrooms are available in the rear of the sanctuary or to the exit to your right, near Gordon Hall. If you still aren't sure of their location, ask a new friend--they'll be happy to show you the way!

Last but not least! We have connection cards. Fill one out and drop it in the offering plate, and our Pastor will be happy to reach out during the week to answer any questions or give you any more information about our great church!

Contact Us

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The Reverend Brent A. Newberry, Pastor
The Reverend Natalie Webb, Associate Pastor of Spiritual Formation and Outreach
Derek Henson, Associate Pastor of Administration & Communication
Wesley Harrison Hall, Minister of Music and Arts

From the Minister of Music, Wesley Hall

One of my very favorite traditions here at the First Baptist Church of Worcester is the Lessons and Carols service. It's had many different names over the years--Candlelight Service, Evensong, Lessons and Carols--but the idea is the same: we gather in the reflective quietude of our candlelit sanctuary and reflect on the nine scripture lessons that describe humankind's persistent struggles and the promise of redemption through Jesus Christ. This year is particularly exciting; it marks our eightieth, and that's something to be very proud of. Multiple generations of this church have gathered as we will on December 16th at 4:00, not simply to hear the beautiful music that men like T. Charles Lee, Barclay Wood, and William Ness crafted, but to be an active part of it, lifting our voices together with the choirs to fill this room with the joy and peace of the Advent season. This year we are making it a very special event, and holding the Annual Christmas Dinner directly following the service in Gordon Hall. Contact the church office or go online to reserve a free ticket, and help us make this the most joyous festival we've had in decades.



From the Moderator, Sarah Sams

To the Congregation of First Baptist Church:

This Fall has been an exciting time for the FBC community. We have welcomed two new ministers, Derek Henson and Natalie Webb, and have had many people participating in the activities and life of the church. It has been a vibrant and fulfilling time.

We have also experienced changes in our church staffing. As many of you know, Joan Gonyea decided to leave after returning from her vacation in October. Additionally, Laurie Canavan is moving on to another opportunity. The Human Resources Team has been very active in reviewing the functions of the church office and exploring the best staffing models to meet the needs of our ministerial staff and our church mission and goals. We have updated and created a job description for an Administrative Assistant. This position has been posted and advertised and applicants are currently under review. The position will provide coverage in the church office Monday through Friday from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM and will support all the ministers, church teams, and ministries of the church, with supervision by Derek Henson, our Associate Pastor of Administration and Communication. We are very appreciative of the faithful volunteers who continue to serve in the mornings. As we go through this interim search period, Gayle Cecchi, our Kitchen Assistant, has stepped up to provide office coverage. If you need to contact the church office regarding building use or communications needs, please speak to Derek.

We are grateful to Joan and Laurie for their years of service to FBC and wish them well as they move on to other opportunities in their lives. Laurie will be with us in worship today and you are invited to express your gratitude for her work with us at that time.

Sarah



Q & A with Brent and Natalie TODAY

Today's Adult Forum will be a Q & A between Natalie and Brent. Please join us in the Whitney Room after worship to welcome and learn about our new Associate Pastor!

Upcoming Adult Forums

December 9: Christmas Sing-Along

December 23: Christmas Fellowship

Retired Ministers Offering

From December 2nd to the 9th, you are invited to give to the American Baptists Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering. The RMMO provides financial support for ministers, missionaries and widowed spouses who have helped build our churches. This form of generosity from our ABC family demonstrates retirees are in fact remembered. Please use the designated RMMO collection envelopes found in the pew rack for your contribution.

Game Night Saturday, December 7th

Texi & Brendon Solis are hosting a monthly game night here at FBC for our church family and community neighbors. The games begin at 7 PM! Play one of the games already here or bring your favorite board or card game to play or teach.



2018 Handbell
Extravaganza
December 14 | 7 PM
First Baptist Sanctuary

A festival of holiday music performed by
handbell choirs and ensembles from the
greater Worcester area

Tickets for the Christmas Dinner are now available!

Contact the church office at 508-755-6143

or register online at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/first-baptist-worcester-christmas-dinner-tickets-52911864812>



Poinsettias for Advent & Christmas

Once again, we are taking contributions for our holiday poinsettias. These plants will decorate our Sanctuary for the Lessons and Carols weekend as well as Christmas Eve services. Forms with information are available at the church office as well as in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Letourneau at the church.

